

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5-8 and 10-17 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14 and 15 are amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 6 and 15 were objected to; Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 11-13, 16 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Potzick (U.S. Patent 5,568,993); Claims 5, 6 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Potzick in view of Archibald (U.S. Patent 4,290,574); and Claims 11, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Archibald in view of Potzick.

Claims 6 and 15 are amended in light of the comments noted in the outstanding Office Action. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 10 and 11 are amended and are supported by the drawings as originally filed, for example Figures 3A-3C. In addition, Claims 5 and 14 are amended for clarification. No new matter is added thereby.

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 11-13, 16 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Potzick. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 1 is directed to an assembly including *inter alia* support device that supports a first object above a second object. The support device includes first, second and third protrusions protruding from the first object and first, second and third pairs of protrusions tightly fitted in first, second and third pairs of holes formed on a surface of the second object, respectively and partially protruding from the surface of the second object. Independent Claim 11 includes similar features.

In a non-limiting example, Figure 3A illustrates a support device that supports a first object (6) above a second object (1). The support device includes first, second and third protrusions (7, 8, 9) protruding from the first object (6) and first, second and third pairs of protrusions (2a-2b, 3a-3b, 4a-4b) tightly fitted in first, second and third pairs of holes formed on a surface of the second object, respectively and partially protruding from the surface of the second object (1).

On the contrary, Potzick discloses a footer structure (static kinematic design) incorporating three balls (57) in a cylindrical recess formed in the lower support plate (22) (see column 5, lines 53-57 and Figure 10). As Figure 10 of Potzick illustrates, the three balls (57) are placed on a surface of the lower support plate (22) where the cylindrical recess is formed. In contrast to the assembly as recited in amended Claims 1 and 11 of the present application, the three balls (57) are not tightly fitted and do not partially protrude from the surface of the lower support plate (22).

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent Claims 1 and 11 and each of the claims dependent therefrom define over the cited art.

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 5, 6 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Potzick in view of Archibald. That rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 10 is directed to a method for supporting a first object on a second object including *inter alia* fitting first, second and third pairs of metal balls into first, second and third pairs of indentations made in the second object such that the first, second and third pairs of metal balls are tightly fitted in the respective pairs of indentations and partially protrude from a surface of the second object (see also Figure 3A).

As discussed above in addressing the rejection of Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 11-13, 16 and 17, Potzick discloses the footer structure incorporating the three balls (57) in the cylindrical

recess formed in the lower support plate (22), and the three balls (57) are placed on a surface of the lower support plate (22) where the cylindrical recess is formed. Unlike the method as recited in amended Claim 10, the three balls (57) are not tightly fitted and do not partially protrude from the surface of the lower support plate (22). In addition, Claims 5 and 6 depend from Claim 1, which as discussed above is believed to be allowable. Further, it is respectfully submitted that Archibald also does not teach or suggest first, second and third pairs of protrusions tightly fitted in first, second and third pairs of holes formed on a surface of a second object, respectively and partially protruding from the surface of the second object as recited in independent Claims 1 and 11. Furthermore, Archibald also does not teach or suggest fitting first, second and third pairs of metal balls into first, second and third pairs of indentations made in a second object such that the first, second and third pairs of metal balls are tightly fitted in the respective pairs of indentations and partially protrude from a surface of the second object as recited in independent Claim 10. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested this rejection also be withdrawn.

Addressing now the rejection of Claims 11, 14 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Archibald in view of Potzick. It is respectfully submitted that this rejection is moot in light of the discussions presented above since neither of the cited references show first, second and third pairs of protrusions tightly fitted in first, second and third pairs of holes formed on a surface of a second object, respectively and partially protruding from the surface of the second object.

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In view of the present amendment and discussions presented above, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

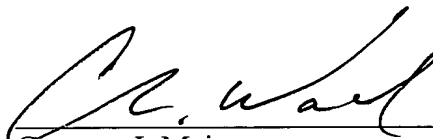
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. J. Maier", is written over a horizontal line.

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